

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-13, 15-19, 21-37 and 39-58 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 2, 14, 20 and 38 are canceled and claims 1, 13, 19 and 37 are amended.

Reconsideration based on the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Tzu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,720,116); and claims 1-6, 13-24 and 37-47 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Tzu in view of Kozlovsky et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,859,330) and Hamada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,597,669). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Tzu, alone or in combination with the other applied references, does not teach or suggest a photomask including, inter alia, a fused silica pellicle affixed to the patterned area of masking material, as recited in claim 1, and as similarly recited in claims 13, 19 and 37.

Instead, Tzu teaches the use of a pellicle formed of F-doped quartz. See column 6, lines 7-13 and FIG. 10 of Tzu. However, neither Tzu nor any of the other applied references specifically teach or suggest the use of fused silica, which is a non-crystalline form of quartz.

For at least these reasons, claims 1, 13, 19 and 37 are in condition for allowance. The dependent claims are also in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed as well as for the additional features they recite.

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance with respect to all of the pending claims be issued in this case.

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It is believed that no fee is deemed necessary in connection with this Reply.
However, if any additional fee is required, authorization is hereby given to charge the
amount of any such fee to Deposit Account No. 01-1785.

Respectfully submitted

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